



Briefing Note: Answer to a question from the Education and Workforce Committee's meeting on 20 December 2017

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins		
Date:	12 January 2018	Priority:	Medium
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Drafter:	Ralf Engler	DDI:	
Key contact and number:	Shona Ramsay [REDACTED]	Round robin:	No
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Summary

- This note provides a draft letter with answers to the question asked by Sarah Dowie, Chairperson of the Education and Workforce Committee, at the committee meeting on 20 December 2017.
- The question is: *What is the dropout rate/estimated failure rate in the first year versus the third year?*



Shelley Robertson
Acting Group Manager, Tertiary Education
Graduate Achievement, Vocations and Careers

12/1/18

Background

1. On 20 December 2017 you attended the Education and Workforce Select Committee. The Committee received a briefing on the implementation of the first year of free tertiary education. The Committee Chairperson, Sarah Dowie M.P. asked for information on the dropout rate/estimated failure rate in the first year versus the third year of tertiary study. You undertook to provide this information. This note presents a draft letter with answers to her question.
2. The question is: *what is the dropout rate/estimated failure rate in the first year versus the third year?*
3. We understand the question relates specifically to bachelors-level study.
4. We also interpret the question to be asking about the cumulative proportion of students who have discontinued their studies *after* one year and *after* three years (the 'dropout rate').

The answer

5. The information is for domestic students starting a bachelors degree in 2013, the most recent cohort of students for which one and three year rates are available.
6. For these students, 14% stopped their studies without completing after one year. Of the remaining students who continued on to a third year of study, 7% discontinued their studies, without completing, in this third year. In total, after three years of study, 27% of the original 2013 bachelors student cohort had stopped their studies without completing.

Explanatory notes

7. While the Committee's question is phrased in terms of a dropout rate and a failure rate, the Ministry doesn't use these terms. The dropout rate is published on the Education Counts website as the 'attrition rate'.
8. The first and third year refer to study years, not calendar years.

Next steps

9. A response is required by 5.00pm on Friday, 19 January 2018. The written response needs to be sent to John Thomson, Clerk of the Education and Workforce Committee.

Annexes

Annex 1: Draft letter of response to the Select Committee.

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xx January 2018

Sarah Dowie
Chairperson of the Education and Workforce Committee
c/-
John Thomson
Clerk of the Education and Workforce Committee
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear John

On 20 December 2017, the Education and Workforce Committee received a briefing from myself and officials on the implementation of the first year of free tertiary study.

During the briefing, the Chairperson asked: *What is the dropout rate/estimated failure rate in the first year versus the third year?* I undertook to provide data to answer this question.

The information is for domestic students starting a bachelors degree in 2013, the most recent cohort of students for which one and three year rates are available.

For these students, 14% stopped their studies without completing after one year. Of the remaining students who continued on to a third year of study, 7% discontinued their studies, without completing, in this third year. In total, after three years of study, 27% of the original 2013 bachelors student cohort had stopped their studies without completing.

I trust this information answers your question. If you require any clarification, or additional figures, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education